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Maria, Budina

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Maria E. Budina,

PhD Student, the chair of Germanic languages, Vyatka State University of Humanities, Kirov, Kirov Region, Russia
moonlady@mail.ru

The Peculiarities of the Phrase “Orange Revolution” in English Sentences

Abstract. *The article is devoted to the questions of the phrase “orange revolution” functioning. This phrase has two meanings and according to these meanings the author describes the pointers, which help readers to guess the right meaning of the phrase. The research is made within the corpus linguistics.*

Keywords: *orange revolution, precedential phenomenon, corpus linguistics*

The Orange Revolution, which took place in the Ukraine in 2004, is the word internationally known to all contemporaries. But the distinctive feature of phrase “orange revolution” (below in the text – “or”) is that it became a precedential phenomenon (the concept in Russian philology, that means the word or phrase known to each representative of one or another linguistic-cultural community) and now the phrase has two different meanings: 1. The event in the Ukraine in 2004; 2) Some “reference”, “ideal” situation with the concrete connotations [2, c. 151]. I.e. having heard the phrase “or”, a person, first of all, think about the events in the Ukraine. But in the concrete context the meaning of it changes and “or” in person’s perception turns into the universal “model”, where only the important features are emphasized. The ‘or’ is associated with any coup d’état in present regime (or direction) either in a country/region or in any institution. However, at the same time other significant characteristics of “or”, e.g. the declaration of the election returns invalid or numerous mass-meetings and protest actions, held in the Ukraine during two month after the presidential elections, are in the background. In our previous research we gave two variants of spelling the phrase “or” in the Russian language and it depends on the meaning of the phrase:

1) If it concerns the Ukrainian events, the word “Orange” is spelled with the capital letter and the word “revolution” – with the small one. Both words should be written without quotation marks (Orange revolution).

2) If we concerns the precedential phenomenon, both words should be written with the small letters and with quotation marks (“orange revolution”) [1].

The object of the research in this article is the phrase “or” in the English language and especially in American English and British English. To find out how the phrase functions in the language, we analyzed four corpora of the English language:

- 1) Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) [3];
- 2) Corpus of Web-based English (GLOWBE) [5];
- 3) British News [6];
- 4) TIME Magazine corpus [4].

As the result we singled out 230 English sentences, containing the phrase “or”, from 110 unique sources (both printed media and the Internet) of various countries such, as the USA, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, etc. Because of these sentences the functioning of the phrase “or” in English can be described in details.

As in Russian, the form of spelling the phrase “or” in English is of the particular interest. We can see many variations in writing, but unlike the Russian language, where there are discrepancies in letter case and quotation marks, in the English language besides the discrepancies listed above there is an ambiguity in using articles. There are 13 variations of



spelling the phrase “or”, the most prevalent one is – the Orange Revolution (44,10% from the general number of sentences) and it is obvious, because it is accepted to write the names of the historical events from the capital letters with the definite article “the” (e.g. the American Civil War, the War of the Roses). However, we can see other spelling variations:

- With the indefinite article (3.93%);
- With zero article (27.51%);
- Both words are in quotation marks (24.89%);
- Both words are from the small letters (20.96%);
- The word “revolution” is from the small letter (6.11).

The reason of this variations is hidden in two different meanings of the phrase, which were described above; 1) The Orange Revolution in the Ukraine in 2004; 2) “or” as the precedential phenomenon. Relying on these meanings, the peculiarities of the phrase “or” in English language can be viewed. In the previous research we singled out the “so-called” markers, which help the readers to identify the correct meaning of the phrase in the sentence.

The Orange Revolution in the Ukraine in 2004

In the sentences, where the phrase “or” is used in the meaning of the historical and political event, five different markers can be distinguished:

1. The authors use the subordinate clauses, which describe the most significant feature of the event in the concrete context (19.02%).

Moscow says Kiev should follow the logic of the “Orange Revolution”, in which Ukrainians broke free from Russian influence, and accept that the days of Soviet era energy subsidies must end.

In the 2004 Ukrainian presidential election, Yanukovich, who was then Ukraine’s prime minister and the handpicked successor to President Leonid Kuchma, was accused of fraud and ousted by the Orange Revolution, which was led by Viktor Yushchenko and Yulia Tymoshenko.

2. The authors use the marker, which points to the place, where the revolution was held (29.45%). The marker can show on the geographical place of the Orange Revolution, e.g. country or city. Both the possessive case of geographical names, as “Ukraine’s” or “Kiev’s”, and the preposition “in” can be used. The geographical name in the sentence can be as a noun, as an adjective.

I was speaking with the benefit of experience in seeing a democratic movement evolve when we were in close contact with many of those involved in Ukraine’s Orange Revolution.

Nashi was designed to prevent a Russian version of the 2004 Orange Revolution in Ukraine, where youth opposition activists played the central role in the protests that forced a rigged presidential election to be rerun, leading to the victory of Putin antagonist Viktor Yushchenko.

This we saw clearly in the “Orange Revolution” in Kiev of winter 2004-5, led by Yushchenko and his American wife.

The marker can be presented with such words, as “country’s”, “Yushchenko’s”, “his”, etc., which also refer the reader to the Ukrainian events.

From Russia’s perspective, U.S. support for Viktor Yushchenko’s Orange Revolution was not just about promoting democracy; it was also about undermining Russia’s influence in a neighboring state that had joined the Russian empire volun-



tarily in the seventeenth century and that had both significant cultural ties with Russia and a large Russian population.

3. The authors use the marker, which points to the time limits of the event (32.52%) The most widely spread variant is mentioning the year 2004, when the revolutionary events were at their culmination, but also the words "recent", "last year", "8 years ago", etc. are used in this type of sentences.

It is often forgotten that Ukraine's bid to join NATO was made before the 2004 Orange Revolution that ushered in President Viktor Yushchenko, a vocal and determined advocate of NATO membership for Ukraine.

Ukraine, which broke free of Moscow's orbit in last year's "Orange Revolution", was hit last month with more than a quadruple price hike for natural gas supplies - from \$50 per 1,000 cubic meters to \$230.

4. The authors use the phrase "or" in combination with the other analogous political events and compare them (14.72%). First, the names of the other colour revolutions are used, such as the Rose Revolution in Georgia, the Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan, the Cedar Revolution in Lebanon.

The Rose Revolution happened in the nation of Georgia in 2003 because people knew their election had been stolen, and so did those who joined the Orange Revolution in Ukraine last year.

Unsurprisingly, the thrill of that victory led to the next two 'cyber wars' - Orange Revolution in the Ukraine in 2004 followed by the Tulip Revolution in 2005.

At last there was a democratic "cedar revolution" to match the US-backed Ukrainian "orange revolution" and a photogenic display of people power to bolster George Bush's insistence that the region is with him.

Also there are the references to the other political events, e.g. the March on Washington in 1963, the breaching of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the Green Revolution in Iran, the Velvet Revolutions in the Eastern Europe in 1989, etc.

If we're very lucky, we've experienced moments of collective elation like the March on Washington in 1963, the breaching of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004, or the Arab Spring in Cairo's Tahrir Square more recently.

In his most recent book, Defeating Dictators, George takes a hard look at the fight against dictatorships around the world, from Ukraine's orange revolution in 2004 to Iran's Green Revolution last year, and examines what strategies worked in the struggle to establish democracy through revolution.

However, you should learn from those courageous nations as (the revolution of jasmine in Romania, the Ukrainian orange revolution, the romantic revolution in Georgia, the Solidarity revolution in Poland, and other peaceful revolutions as happened in Czechoslovakian and Hungary and Bulgaria).

5. The fewest marker is the usage of the phrase "so-called" before "or" (4.29%). The Oxford dictionary interpret the "so-called" as: "...used to show that something or someone is commonly designated by the name or term specified" [7]. Using the marker, the author emphasizes the fact, that the phrase "or" existed before and he/she doesn't invent it by him/herself, but the name of the event will probably become historical.

Ukraine took due notice, and the so called "Orange Revolution" has since been reversed.

It is interesting to note that the markers are presented only in 54.11% of the sentences, it can be explained by the fact that the meaning of the phrase "or" can be easily guessed in the sentences without the markers (e.g. *Ukrainians were damning about the failure of the Or-*



ange Revolution's leader to deliver on their promises.). Most often the names of politicians, who took part in the Orange Revolution (e.g. Viktor Yanukovich, Viktor Yushchenko or Yulia Tymoshenko), appear in the sentences without the markers. Also the words “Ukraine”, “Ukrainian”, “the Ukrainians”, names of the political parties (“Nashi”) and any kind of mentioning of Russian and American leaders and government can be found in this type of sentences.

The precedential phenomenon “orange revolution”

English speaking authors seldom use the phrase “or” in this meaning and describe other political and social events by it. So the percentage is 90.39% of the first meaning of the phrase (the political event) and 9.61% of the second meaning (the precedential phenomenon). In the Russian language the same percentage is 70.11% to 29.89% [1]. The Russian media is oversaturated with the precedential phenomenon “or”: “or” in postsoviet space, Iraq, the Altai Region in Russia, Zimbabwe, and even in the Ukrainian football and Russian church. In the English media the precedential phenomenon “or” is used much more rarely and describes the political events, analogous to the Ukrainian one, in other countries. In this type of sentences only two markers can be singled out.

1. The authors use the marker, which points to the place, where the revolution was held (20.77%). The marker also shows the geographical place of the event, analogous to the “real” Orange Revolution. So in the sentences we can meet the “or” in Russia, Iran, Quebec, etc., which were also based on the results of the “unfair” election results.

An orange revolution in Iran would be very helpful indeed.

As the congress drew to a close, I ran into a Russian friend who wanted to know whom she should call in Washington to get advice on launching an “orange revolution” in Russia.

2. The authors use the standard set of the words together with the phrase “or” (61.54%). These words help the reader to understand the right meaning of the phrase “or”. Here such words as “own”, “a Ukrainian-style”, “a second”, etc., can be found.

IF YANUKOVYCH keeps on his current course, he could very well provoke a second Orange Revolution.

“They fear a Ukrainian-style Orange Revolution will break out if they let people express themselves,” Mr. Ryzhkov said.

In the Russian sentences another 2 markers were singled out along with these markers: the marker of time and negative type of sentence. In the English sentences these markers weren’t found.

Only 59.09% of the sentences with this meaning contain any marker. It can be clearly seen in the table 1 the percentage of the markers in both types of sentences.

Table 1

The quantity of markers in the sentences with the phrase “or”

The quantity of markers in the sentence	The event in the Ukraine, %	The precedential phenomenon, %
Zero	45.89	40.91
1 marker	35.75	59.09
2 markers	12.56	0.00
3 or more markers	5.80	0.00

Conclusion

Table 2 summarizes the research data of the phrase “or” functioning in Russian and English.



Table 2

The percentage of markers in the sentences with the phrase “or” in the Russian and English languages

<i>The event in the Ukraine</i>			<i>The precedential phenomenon</i>		
<i>Marker</i>	<i>Russian, %</i>	<i>English, %</i>	<i>Marker</i>	<i>Russian, %</i>	<i>English, %</i>
Subordinate clause	12.8	19.0	Negative sentence	14,7	7.7
Place	62.2	32.5	Place	48	30.8
Time	16.8	29.5	Time	3.6	–
Political events	8.2	14.7	Set of standard words	33.7	61.5
Set of standard words	–	4.3			

It is obvious that in both languages the phrase “or” has two meanings: 1. The event in the Ukraine; 2. The precedential phenomenon.

In both languages, the sentences with the phrase “or” were viewed. In spite of the prevalence of the precedential phenomenon “or” in Russian, in both languages the most sentences use the phrase in the meaning of the Ukrainian event. The markers, which were singled out in both meanings, help to determine the correct meaning of the phrase in the sentence. I.e. the phrase “or” in the meaning of the political event functions with the help of four markers in the Russian sentence and five markers – in the English ones. The most widespread marker in both languages is the place marker, and then the time marker goes. But in the English language the frequencies of time and place markers are almost same, while in the Russian language the time marker is used noticeably much more seldom than the place marker (in four times). In Russian, there is no marker as “set of standard words” in the first meaning of the phrase. It can be connected with the fact that the English authors use the phrase “so-called” to describe the events in the Ukraine, while the Russian authors describe the precedential phenomenon using the same phrase. That is why we can see the marker “set of standard words” in Russian language in the second meaning of the phrase. Speaking about the meaning of the precedential phenomenon, we can see that the functioning of the phrase is highly different in the languages: in Russian the most widely spread marker is place marker, in English – set of standard words. Also the quantity of markers in the languages differs: there are four markers in Russian and three – in English (one of which is represented by the only one sentence).

We can conclude that the phrase “or”, which historically appeared as the name of the revolutionary actions in the Ukraine in 2004, obtained one more meaning in Russian and English as the result of the increased interest of the world community, and in particular of the Russian and American ones, to the events in the Ukraine.

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